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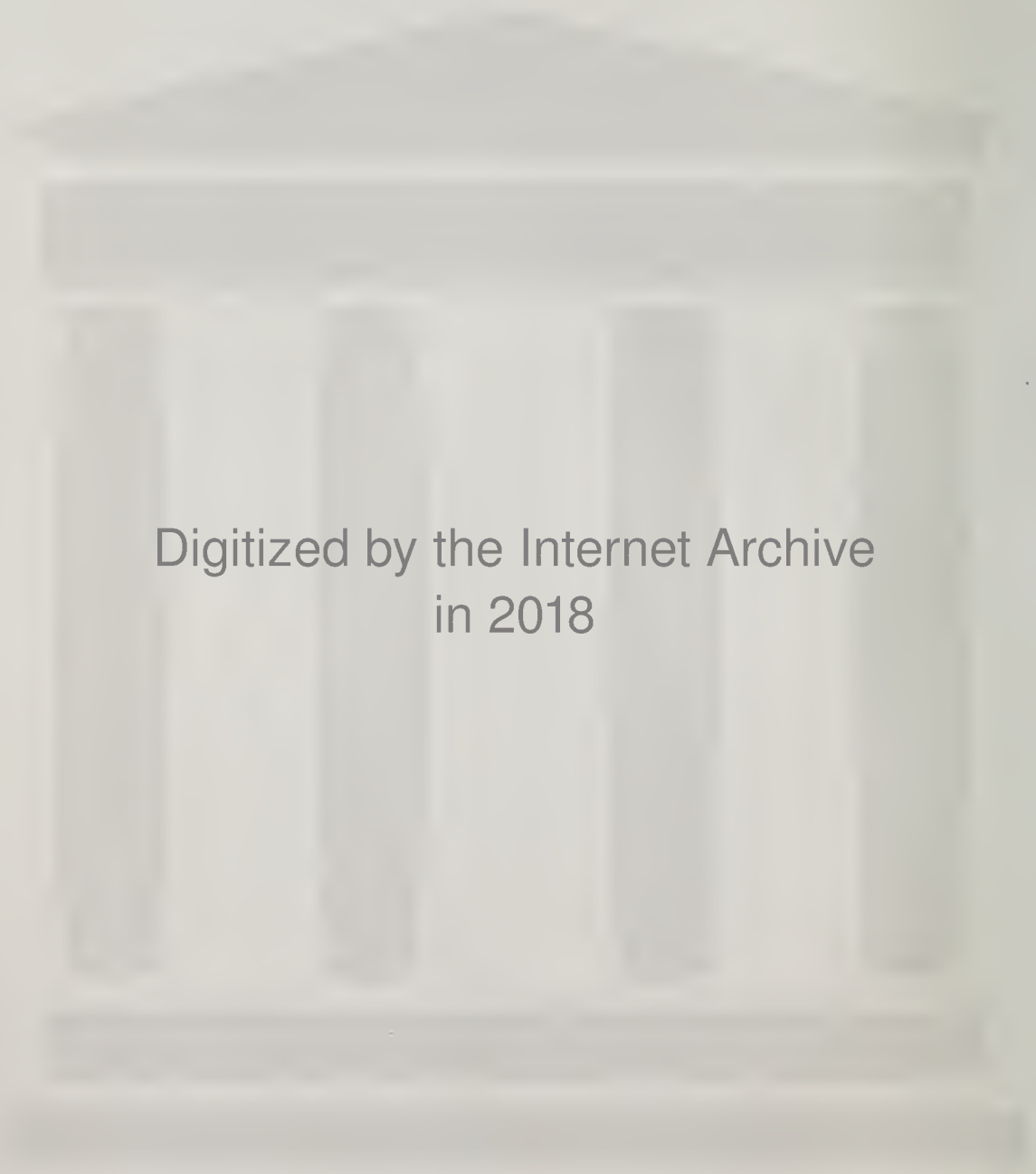
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James Bruce Smith

The Chalmers Family and Aberdeen Newspapers

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The Chalmers Family and Aberdeen Newspapers

LINKS BETWEEN ABERDEEN AND GOTHENBURG

Christmas 1958

Printed by ABERDEEN JOURNALS LIMITED
for Dr. ALEXANDER A. CORMACK,
Retired Head Teacher,
Denside, Peterculter, Aberdeenshire.

1616340

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William Chalmers, Aberdeen (1695-1770), Provost, 1738-1739 and 1746-1747 8

On 1st January, 1740, he laid the foundation stone of the Infirmary, Woolmanhill; he promoted the Poor's Hospital, 1739, a kind of workhouse "to promote religion, suppress vice, propagate industry and virtue, and be a general benefit to society." When crops failed through drought in 1740, he sold for the poor in 1741 all his stocks of grain rents at a low price. Whereupon the Town Council commissioned John Alexander to paint his portrait, which, housed first in the Town House, then in various Infirmary offices, is now to be found in Committee Room 2 of the Town House. This same Provost successfully reclaimed from the Government the full cost of all arms carried off by Sir John Cope in 1745, and likewise the cost of damage done to Robert Gordon's Hospital by Cumberland's troops in 1746. He favoured the union of our two Universities, stipulating for one University in New Aberdeen. There was no union till 1860.

James Chalmers (1) (1713-1764), founder of the Aberdeen Journal 14

He changed the family name from Chalmer to Chalmers. It was printing, dictionaries, newspapers, etc., that fixed our spelling of English in the 18th century.

Susannah Trail (1720-1791), wife of James Chalmers (1) 16

She was a daughter of the Rev. James Trail, M.A. (1681-1723), minister of the Second Charge, Montrose, who died of a broken heart because he was libelled by his Presbytery for contributing one guinea towards the building of St. Peter's English Episcopal Church, Montrose, 1722.

James Chalmers (2) (1741-1810) 20

It was this Chalmers who received Robert Burns and Bishop John Skinner in his office in 1787.

Meeting of Robert Burns, Bishop John Skinner and James Chalmers (2) in 1787 18

Thomas Erskine, Earl of Kellie (1745-1828) 12

This portrait in the County Hall, Cupar, by Sir David Wilkie, was presented by his friends. British Consul in Western Sweden, founder of the Royal Bachelors' Club, Gothenburg, 1769, he unexpectedly succeeded to his Earldom by the death of a nephew. Returning to Scotland, he purchased extensive estates in Fife, and sat as a Scottish Peer in the House of Lords.

David Carnegie (1), merchant, founder in 1803 of D. Carnegie & Co., Gothenburg, an import-export business that still flourishes, but without a Carnegie ... 32

His father, George Carnegie, Captain at age 18 in the Life Guards of Prince Charles Edward, fought at Culloden against his brother, Sir James Carnegie of Pittarrow, and escaped to Gothenburg. Returning hurriedly to Montrose in 1765 upon the death of his brother Sir James, he purchased Pittarrow, etc., to enable his nephew, Sir David Carnegie, to buy back the Kinnaird Estates, forfeited in 1716 by the Earl of Southesk; the wife of this Rebel, Susan Scott of Benholm, founded Montrose Asylum, 1781, and Montrose Savings Bank, 1815.

David Carnegie (2) (1813-1890), merchant, brewer, and sugar refiner, Gothenburg 34

Grandson of George Carnegie, Rebel Captain, and of Susan Scott, son of James Carnegie, Captain of the East Indiamen "Experiment" and "Baring," he founded the Sick Children's Hospital in Gothenburg, 1856; promoter and generous benefactor of Gothenburg University, 1887; church builder in Sweden and in Britain.

Pagoda in Kew Gardens, built by Sir William Chambers, who was born in Gothenburg 1723 and who died in London, 1796 36

His experience in early life as supercargo to the Swedish East India Company is reflected in this design. A mason employed for the building of Somerset House was Thomas Telford, 1757-1834, who later helped with canal construction in Sweden.

Colin Campbell (1686-1757), first supercargo in 1731 to the Swedish East India Company 38

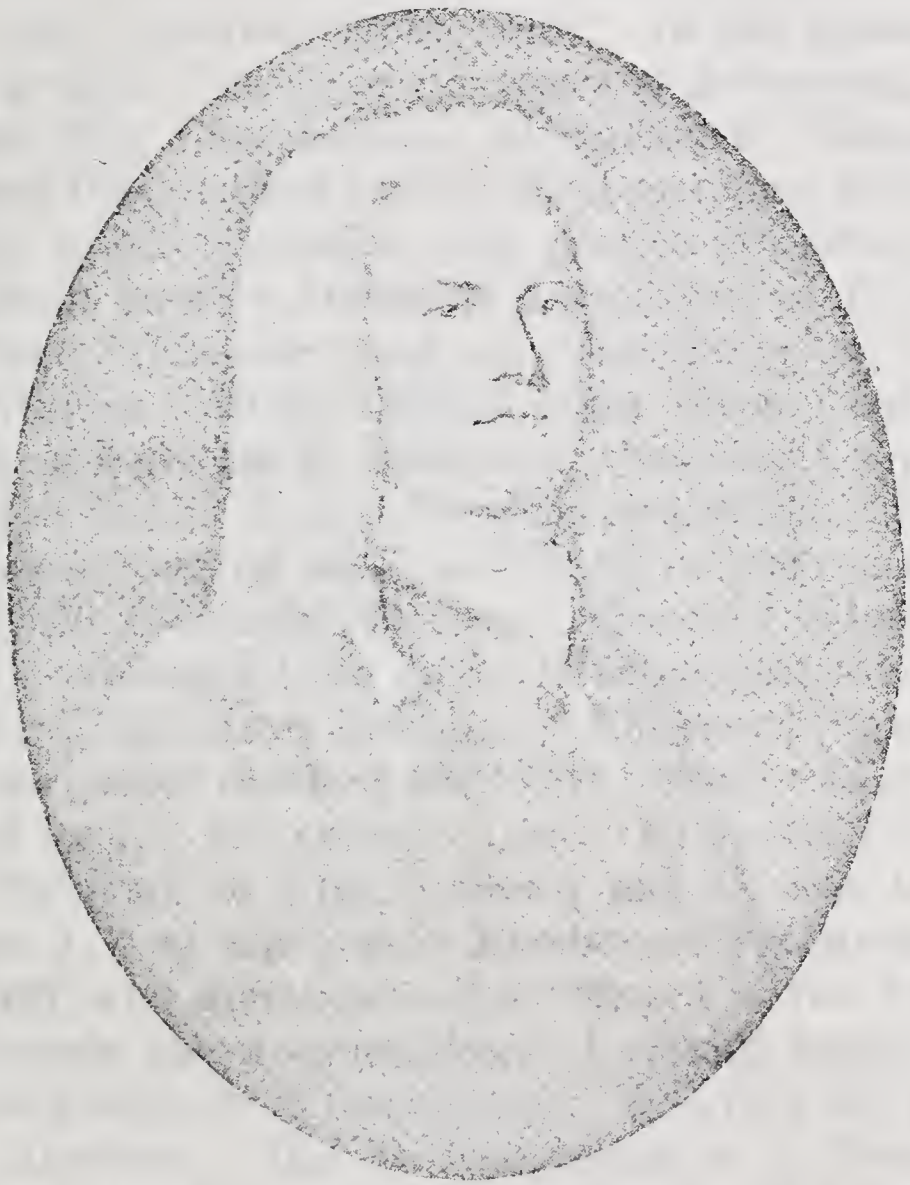
George Carnegie, ex-Rebel merchant, recorded in his cash book, Gothenburg, "March 6, 1758,—Books at Mr. Campbell's Auction. 242 dalers 16 stivers," equal to £13 10/- sterling.

The Chalmers Family and Aberdeen Newspapers

I HAD FAILED to appreciate the distinction of the Chalmers family in our North-East until I came across a William Chalmers in the records of St. Andrew's Church, Gothenburg, Sweden. Serving faithfully as church treasurer to a small congregation, William Chalmers undertook in June, 1757, to contribute annually £5 sterling to pay the stipend of an Episcopalian minister from England. In 1748 and again in 1752 he served a year as treasurer of the British Factory Poor Box for the relief of British sailors stranded in Sweden. His arrival in Gothenburg was recorded in 1738. He became a merchant actively interested too in the Swedish East India Company, founded in 1731 chiefly by refugee Scottish Jacobites like Colin Campbell, Edinburgh, Charles Irvine, Drum, who were joined in 1746 by George Carnegie, Montrose, James Moir, Stoneywood, etc. His wife's name was Inga Orre. Their son William, 1748-1811, after study in Britain, France and Holland, made a fortune as supercargo and agent of the Swedish East India Company at Canton and Macao. Dying a bachelor—as both his brothers died—he left half of his fortune to the hospital, founded by his friend Niklas Sahlgren in 1782, and half to found an Industrial School to produce young craftsmen in Gothenburg, subject to the life-rent of his brothers, who were not so successful. When this school for poor boys was opened in 1829, a speech was delivered and printed by one Pehr Dubb, a medical director of the Swedish Navy. On page one of this old pamphlet I found a coat of arms, a crest, and a motto in French, "Avancez," over the name Sir William Chalmers.

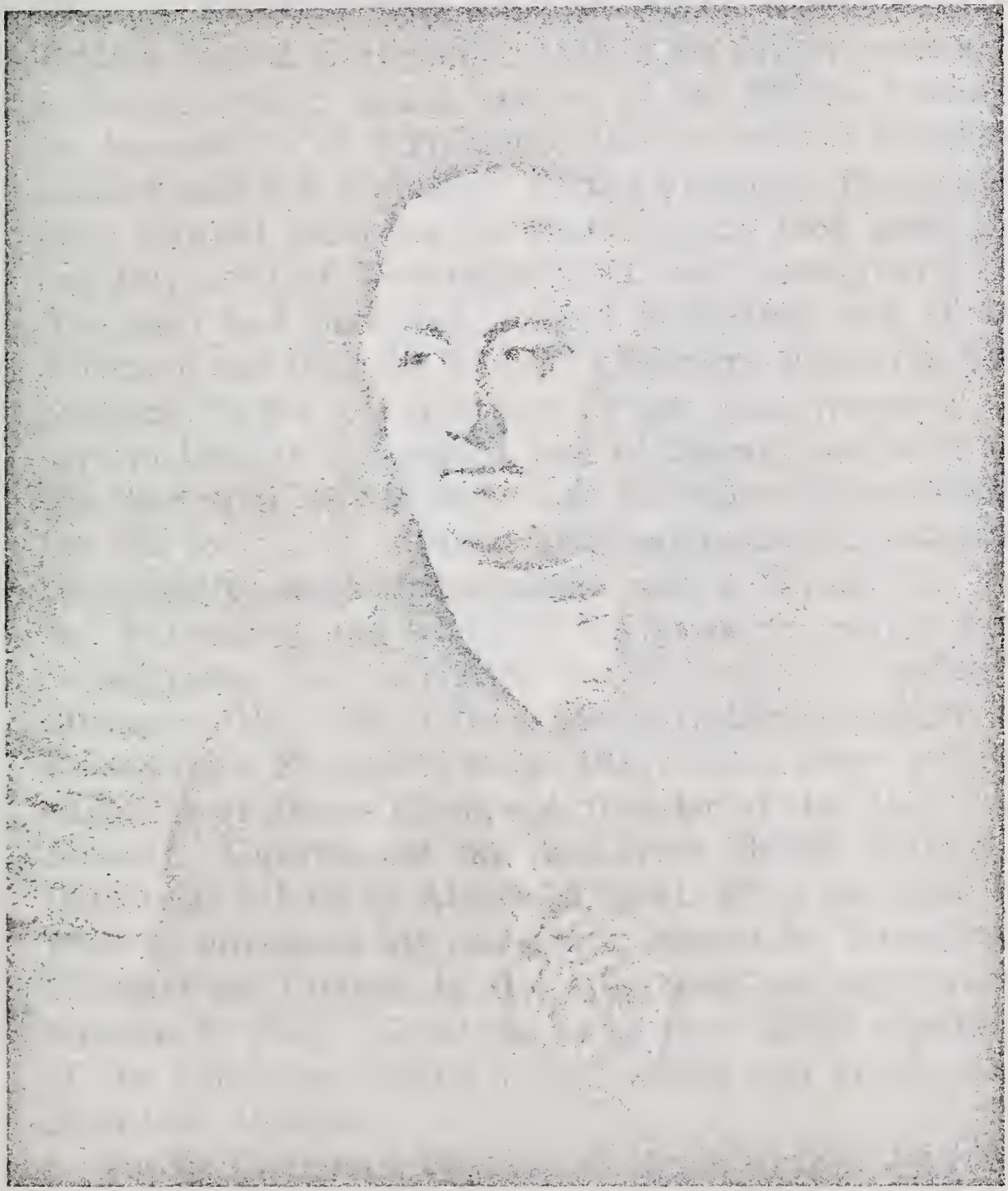
Chalmers Coat of Arms.

This Chalmers Industrial or Sloyd School founded to train craftsmen has so developed that to-day it is known as the Chalmers University of Technology, whose Principal begged me to try to identify the founder of his University through the armorial bearings. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that this coat of arms worn by William Chalmers, Gothenburg, is exactly the same as the original arms of our ancient family, Chalmers of Balnacraig, Aberdeenshire. Thus Gothenburg owes to a Chalmers of Aberdeen stock some of its world-wide fame for craftsmanship in both wood and metal. In 1958 this Chalmers University of Technology bears the Chalmers motto, "Avancez." Further, this coat of arms is sculptured on a stone boss on the roof of St. Mary's Chapel, Aberdeen, built in the last quarter of the 15th century. The crest and the motto are those worn by a younger branch of the Chalmers family, of Cults, Tarland. Alexander Nisbet in his Heraldry, 1722, described the Cults emblems thus: Argent, a demi-lion rampant sable, issuing out of a fess gules, with a fleur-de-lys in base of the last. For crest, head and neck of a lion sable langued gules with the motto "Avancez." This being interpreted means: The background colour of the shield is silver; the colour of the lion is dark brown; the horizontal band or fess is scarlet like the gueules or gums of an animal; the fleur-de-lys is also scarlet on silver. Francisque Michel, who wrote *Les Ecossais en France* in 1862, recorded that several men of the Chalmers family served in the French Army in the 15th century, bearing the same coat of arms. Doubtless the fleur-de-lys and the motto had been granted by a French King for faithful service. A Chalmers seal still exists in Aberdeen Town House, attached to a charter dated 6th December, 1449. The oldest gravestone in our city's mother Church of St. Nicholas, records in Latin the death of Provost



William Chalmers, Aberdeen (1695-1770),
Provost, 1738-1739 and 1746-1747.

Alexander Chalmers in 1463. It is built into the wall of Collison's Aisle. The same coat of arms was cut on the Chalmers desk or pew early in the 17th century with an inscription below in Latin, "The last resting place and pew of Alexander Chalmers, Provost, and of his family, renowned for their ancestry and distinctions over many centuries from 1313." In his manuscript, *History of the Family of Chalmers of Balnacraig, 1901,* the late City Chamberlain, Alexander M. Munro, has recorded that at least twenty-eight members served the church, pre-Reformation and post-Reformation; that this family gave to Aberdeen University two Principals and three Professors; and one Principal to the English Presbyterian Church College; that seven Chalmerses served as Provosts to Aberdeen; that four Chalmerses served as Sheriff Clerk, Aberdeen and Banff; that three Chalmerses served as Town Clerk in Aberdeen; that since 1800 Alexander Chalmers, George Chalmers and Patrick Chalmers have made valuable contributions to historical literature; that James Chalmers founded the first newspaper north of the Forth, which was carefully nursed by his descendants; that Dr. James Chalmers was Physician to King James I and VI and to King Charles I; that one was a Member of Parliament, one a Sheriff, and many served as officers in the Services. But there's aye a something! I cannot identify this William Chalmers of Gothenburg. Was he a black sheep from Aberdeen? Did he seek refuge as a Jacobite in Sweden? Did he belong to a branch of the family in France, in Silesia, or in Poland? I found the grave of William Chalmers in Stampgatan cemetery, Gothenburg, with an obelisk in stone inscribed in Swedish—Merchant, director of the Swedish East India Company, Knight of the Order of Gustavus Vasa, born 1748, died 1811. His brothers died, Charles in 1814 and James in 1817. The purpose of his Industrie Skola was to train



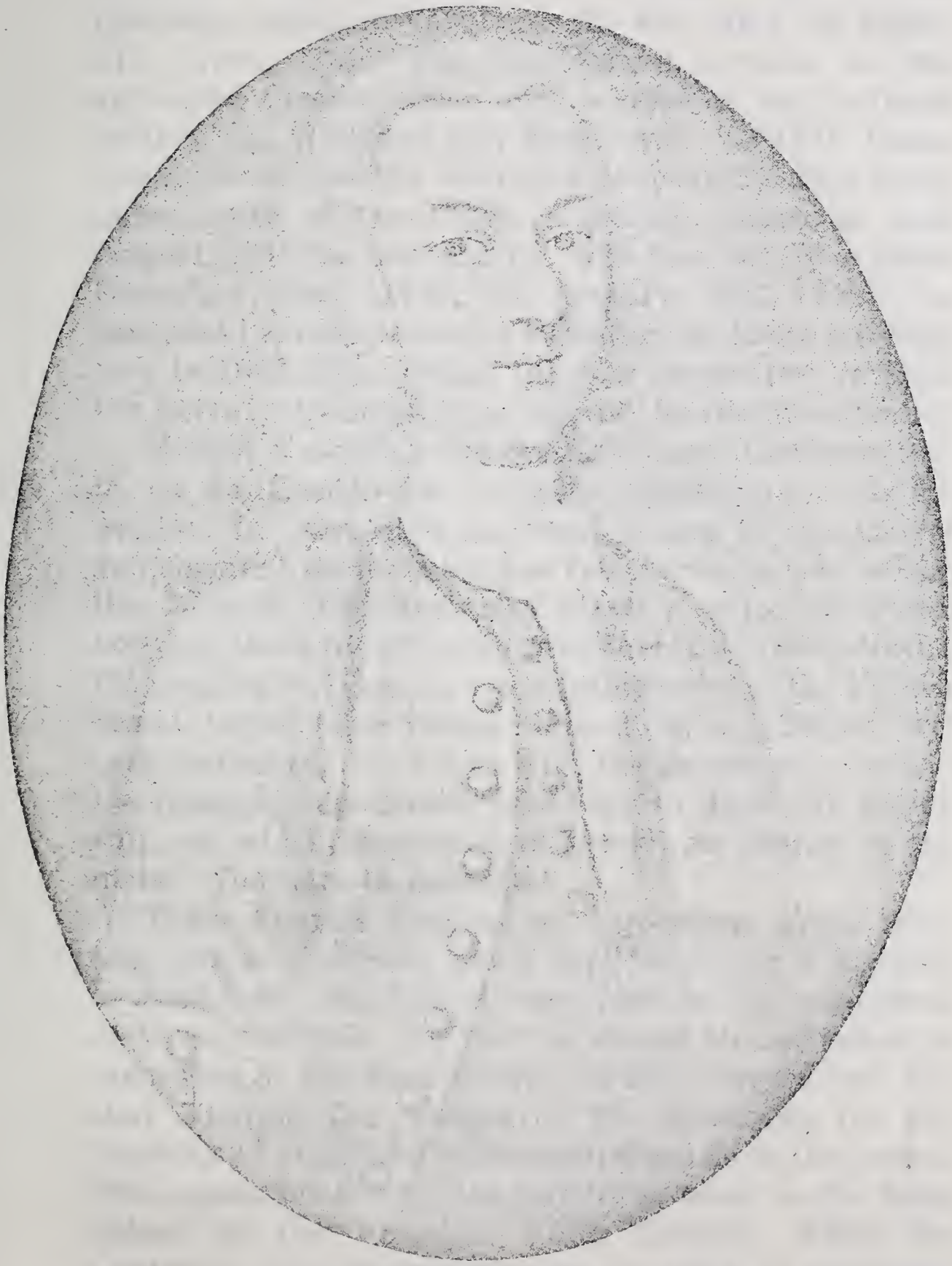
William Chalmers, Gothenburg (1748-1811),
founder of the Chalmers University of Technology.

deprived bairns (boys) to be craftsmen by the Sloyd system. He was a founder member (No. 15) of the Gothenburg Bachelors' Club, promoted in 1769 by Thomas Erskine, later Earl of Kellie, merchant and British Consul, Gothenburg. While his father remained a British subject and a member of the British Factory or Association of Merchants, the son was a Swedish subject and not a member of the Factory. The Aberdeen Journal recorded his death, which took place on 3rd July, on 13th November, 1811; the connection with Aberdeen had persisted: "Died at Gothenburg at an advanced age [62] Sir William Chalmers, Knight of the Swedish Order of Gustavus Vasa, and member of several trading companies, and of literary societies on the Continent. Sir William was not more distinguished for his extensive political and commercial knowledge than for his active benevolence and public spirit. He has left nearly the whole of his property, which was considerable, to charitable institutions in Sweden." Strangely, the wife of Dr. Thomas Guthrie, founder of Edinburgh's Ragged Schools, 1847, was a great granddaughter of James Chalmers, founder of the Aberdeen Journal. Guthrie got his idea from Sheriff Watson's Industrial School in Aberdeen, 1841, when he came in 1845 to introduce his classmate, Alexander Anderson, to the Free Church in Old Aberdeen — a temporary erection in wood. Meantime let us trace those members of the Chalmers family who founded and nursed the Aberdeen Journal.

James Chalmers, founder of the Aberdeen Journal, was the eldest surviving son of James Chalmers, M.A., Marischal College, 1705, minister of Dyke, Morayshire, 1709-1728, minister of Greyfriars, Aberdeen, and professor of divinity in Marischal College, 1728-1744. His mother was Jean Chalmers, cousin to his father, daughter of the Rev. George Chalmers, Drumblade;

Thomas Erskine, Earl of Kellie (1743-1828).

close intermarriage was too common in those old days: it kept possessions within the family. James, the printer, was baptised on 8th January, 1713; at that time the registrar was the Kirk Session Clerk in each parish, who recorded not births but baptisms only. Civil registration in Scotland began on 1st January, 1855. Thus the Church of Scotland lost in 1855 a very useful contact with its parishioners — a contact still maintained by the Lutheran State Church of Sweden, whose parish minister is the registrar paid by the State for his official duties. James Chalmers served his apprenticeship with James Nicol, printer to the Town Council and University of Aberdeen, beginning at age fifteen in 1728, when his father was translated from Dyke to Greyfriars. Thence he moved to London as an improver in the house of Watts, Lincoln's Inn Fields, where the famous American patriot, Benjamin Franklin, had been an improver in 1725-1726. Learning in 1736 that James Nicol was about to give up business, James Chalmers returned to Aberdeen to purchase Nicol's business, and to be appointed at age 23 printer to the Town Council and to Marischal College. As Town Council printer he had the use of the printing shop above the Mealmarket on the north side of Castle Street, where Edward Raban, the first Town Council printer, set up his press in 1623. The long series of volumes printed by James Chalmers is evidence of his natural ability and education. In the Rebellion of 1745 Chalmers stood by the Government against the Jacobites, printing all official Government proclamations for the North of Scotland. When the Jacobites occupied Aberdeen, Chalmers escaped south to join the Duke of Cumberland. His apprentices in Aberdeen were compelled to print for the Jacobites proclamations and demand notes, for money and levies of men. The first authentic and detailed account of the Battle of Culloden received in



James Chalmers (1) (1713-1764),
founder of the Aberdeen Journal.

Aberdeen was contained in a letter from James Chalmers, dated at Inverness the day after the battle, 17th April, 1746. For his faithful services he was appointed Commissioner over several of the forfeited estates, *e.g.* Hallhead and Esslemont. In 1748 James Chalmers started the Aberdeen Journal, the first newspaper north of the Forth, a weekly, which on 25th August, 1876, became a daily. The first copy was dated December 29th, 1747, to January 5th, 1748. An excellent reproduction was issued on its 150th anniversary in 1898. Thus began the first newspaper north of the Forth, subsidised, it is believed, by the Government.

Within a month after the first issue, Chalmers had to go to London on business concerning forfeited estates. In those days one went by sea, by the fastest and cheapest route. Alas, the vessel on which he sailed, the Princess Carolina, was taken a prize off Flamborough Head by a French privateer, Le Cheval Marin. Passengers and captain were transferred to the French vessel, where their chests were stove in, pillaged, and cast overboard. Five days later the passengers, but not the captain, were transferred back to their own empty ship, on which they reached London in charge of the mate. Toujours la politesse!

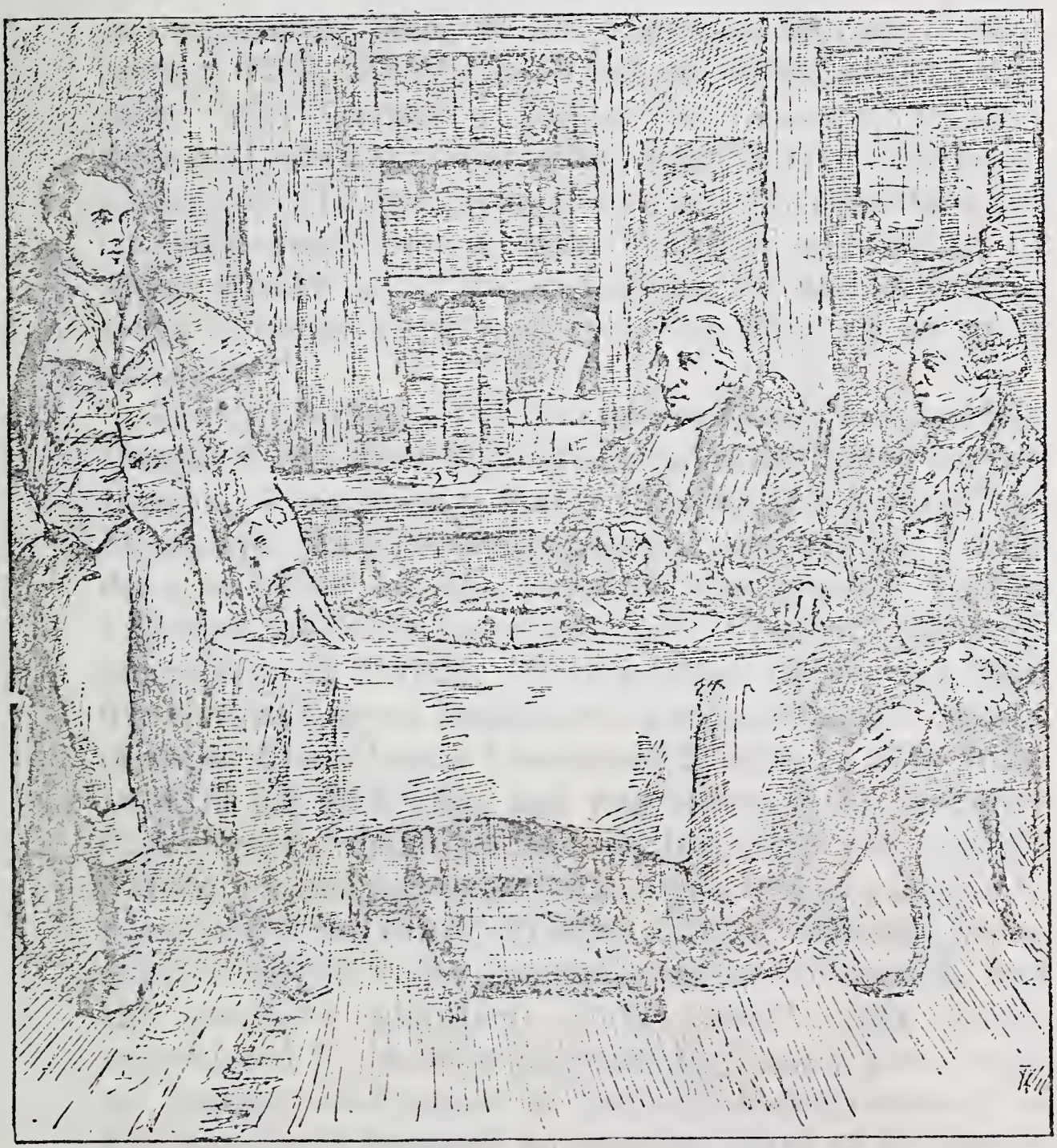
Town Council Records on November, 1740, show that James Chalmers made application for a vacancy in Aberdeen Song School—to which he was appointed on two conditions: (1) that he should himself serve as precentor in the East Church of St. Nicholas and (2) that Andrew Tait should be his substitute for the teaching of vocal and instrumental music in the school. This appointment was the last to be made to the Song School by the Aberdeen Town Council. While the Grammar School's purpose was to teach in particular Latin Grammar, there was an English School as evidenced by a gravestone close to the Chalmers tomb:

Susannah Trail (1720-1791),
wife of James Chalmers (1).

"Here rests in the Lord John Cormack, Mr. of the English School of Abdn. who departed this life the 17 of Novr 1672." Whether John was an ancestor of mine I don't know. Two of my uncles were schoolmasters.

James Chalmers married on 14th March, 1739, Susan Trail (born 3rd March, 1720), a daughter of the Rev. James Trail, Minister of Montrose (1681-1723), by his wife Christian, a daughter of Provost John Allardes, Aberdeen (Provost, 1700-1701).

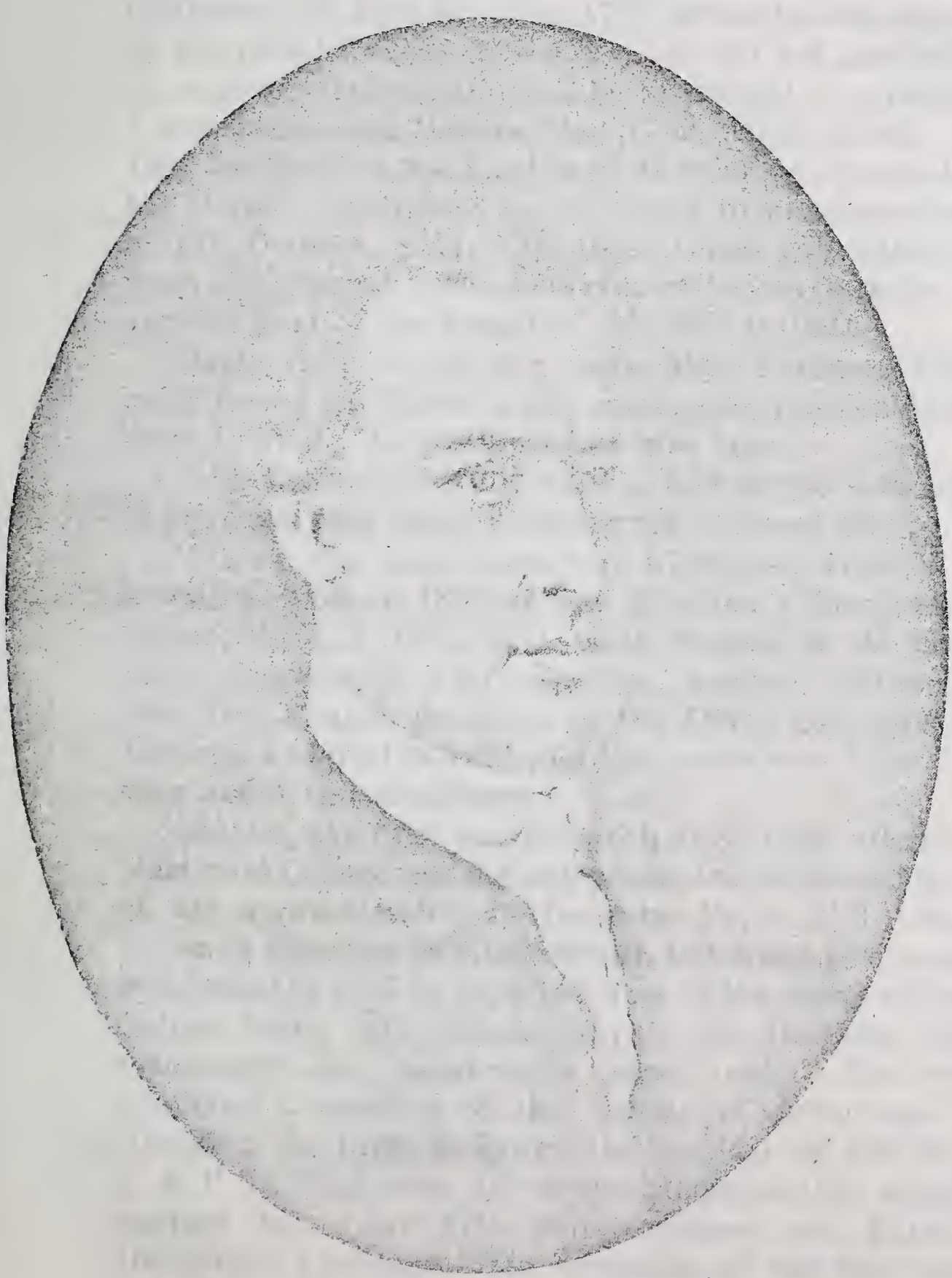
James Chalmers died on 25th August, 1764, and was succeeded in the business by his eldest son, James, born 21st March, 1741, who was absent in training at London when his father died. The Aberdeen Journal of 3rd September, 1764, carried this paragraph: "As Mr. Chalmers the late Publisher of the Journal died the 25th of last month, Mrs. Chalmers his Widow begs leave to acquaint the Public that her son James, who was bred to the Printing Business with his Father, and for several years past has been in London prosecuting and improving himself in his Business, designs soon to return to and to carry on his Business in this Place, in conjunction with Mrs. Chalmers, his Mother, who in the meantime keeps up the Business as formerly. As Mr. Chalmers served the County of Aberdeen in the office of Printer with general approbation for twenty-eight years preceding his Death, Mrs. Chalmers and her Son beg leave thro' this Channel, not only to return their hearty Thanks to all the Gentlemen of the County for their Favours shown, but also to intimate to them, that they intend to stand Candidates for the said office at next General Election." The Journal of 15th October, 1764, announced that "James Chalmers has just arrived from London." As evidence of his vigour in business, there appeared annually from 1771 the Aberdeen Almanack, which had been published only intermittently by his father. This Almanack is useful in



Meeting of Robert Burns, Bishop John Skinner and James Chalmers (2) in 1787.

providing local information before the Aberdeen Directory first appeared for the year 1824-1825. A highly interesting episode in the life of the second James Chalmers was the visit paid by the poet Robert Burns to the printing office of the Aberdeen Journal in September, 1787. While Burns left on record his meeting with "Mr. Chalmers, printer, a facetious fellow," Bishop Skinner, son of the Rev. John Skinner, Longside, who wrote "Tullochgorum," etc., has described how the trio adjourned for "a dram o'er such a meeting, at which though our time was short, we had fifty auld sangs through hand and spent an hour or so most agreeably."

James Chalmers (2) married on 22nd March, 1769, Margaret, daughter of David Douglas of Panton Street, London, of the Deeside family Douglas of Tilquhilly and Inchmarlo. As Margaret was under age and her father dead, sanction for the wedding was granted by her guardian, uncle by marriage, John Frederick Pückert, afterwards of Murtle. Of this union there were born five sons and seven daughters—a common size of family in those days. James Chalmers (2) died on 17th June, 1810, in his 69th year, and was buried in St. Nicholas Churchyard, where we find on his tomb this record: "He left to his numerous offspring a bright example of every social and every christian virtue." His own newspaper recorded "The rich endowments of his mind and the excellent qualities of his heart were justly appreciated by those who intimately knew him; while his general benevolence of disposition and integrity of life deservedly engaged an unusual share of the public respect and esteem." A younger brother of James Chalmers (2), namely Alexander Chalmers, born 1759, graduated M.A. 1778 at Marischal College and became a distinguished journalist, editor, critic, biographer, and historian. He died 1834.



James Chalmers (2) (1741-1810).

The eldest son of James Chalmers (2) was James Chalmers (3), born 3rd June, 1775, who attended classes at Marischal College 1788-1791, but did not graduate. A master printer in Dundee, he attempted to establish a newspaper, the Dundee Mail 1799, which failed. In 1801 for the first few months of its existence he printed the Dundee Advertiser, but withdrew by announcement of 9th October, 1801, "because it was his intention from some recent unforeseen circumstances to reside in another part of the country." He died in 1831.

David, the second son, born 19th October, 1788, early joined his father in the management of the Aberdeen Journal. We shall discuss him later.

John Frederick, the third son, died at the early age of four, as very many children did in those days.

William, the fourth son, born 27th June, 1786, M.A. Marischal College 1803 at age 17 after a four years' course, M.R.C.S. 1805, M.D. 1820, Surgeon in the East India Company's Civil Service, married Elizabeth Margaret Pungel, daughter of the Dutch Governor of Malacca, and died in 1862. Of this union were born five sons and seven daughters.

Charles, the fifth son, born 6th July, 1790, attended Marischal College but did not graduate. He served part of his apprenticeship in Devanha Paper Mill (later Devanha Brewery ex Gilcomston), but when this paper mill closed in 1807 he switched over to the study of law. Culter Paper Mill bought up all the Devanha Mill machinery—for hand-made paper only. He was admitted a member of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen in 1812, and was the founder of the firm C. & P. H. Chalmers, Advocates, Aberdeen, the second partner being his fifth and youngest son, Patrick Henderson Chalmers. The evolution of the firm was (1) Charles Chalmers, (2) Chalmers and Farquhar, (3) C. and J. H. Chalmers, being a partnership of

Charles and his brother James Hay Chalmers, (4) C. and P. H. Chalmers, father and his fifth son, Patrick Henderson Chalmers. This firm has specialised as factors of estates and as political agents. Charles Chalmers inherited from his bachelor friend James Hay, who died in 1828, the estate of Monkshill, Fyvie, which became the home of Charles Chalmers and of his descendants. It is to the second partner, Patrick Henderson Chalmers, M.A., 1858, Advocate in Aberdeen, 1864, of Avochie, that we owe the great mass of information about the Chalmers family which was tabulated later by Munro in 1901. Charles Chalmers died in 1877, aged 87, and lies in Fyvie Churchyard with his wife and three sons. From four married daughters of Charles Chalmers were descended many distinguished sons, *e.g.* Principal David Brown, Aberdeen Free Church College, the Rev. Dr. Charles J. Brown, Free North Church, Edinburgh, sons of Provost Alexander Brown, bookseller and paper maker of Devanha; Dr. Robert Dyce, M.D., professor of Midwifery, Aberdeen; William Dyce, Royal Academician; Rev. James Chalmers Burns, D.D., Moderator of the Free Church Assembly, 1879; William Littlejohn, banker, and David Littlejohn, Sheriff Clerk, Aberdeen; William Chalmers Burns, missionary in China, etc.

Now we come back to David Chalmers, second son of James Chalmers (2), and in turn third printer and publisher of the Aberdeen Journal; born 19th October, 1788, he had to assume at age 21 the full charge of the Journal when his father died in 1810. From this date the firm took the name of D. Chalmers & Co. What were the qualities of David? "Activity, tact and industry." He was the first newspaper proprietor in Scotland to employ steam in printing — in 1830. So jealous was he of the good name of the Journal that he himself read every item of news before publication. It

is said that the first germ of a leading article is to be found in a postscript written by David Chalmers on the occasion of the trial of the Princess Caroline of Wales, wife of George IV, in 1819. He served in the Town Council 1812, 1814, 1816, 1839-1848. In 1823 he bought from the Trustees of George More of Raeden the estate of Westburn, on which he built the existing house of Westburn. He died on 24th April, 1859, aged 80, and was buried in St. Nicholas Churchyard. Two of his daughters married Provosts of Aberdeen; Margaret married John Webster of Edgehill, Advocate in Aberdeen, Lord Provost 1856-1859, M.P. for the city 1880-1885; Jane married Alexander Nicol, shipowner and Lord Provost 1866-1869. In my boyhood I used to admire a sailing vessel called Alexander Nicol in Aberdeen harbour, about 1900, Aberdeen's last sailing vessel, I should guess. Two sons of David entered their father's business of printing and publishing, namely James and John Gray, who conducted the Journal until in May, 1876, the business was transformed into a limited liability company under the name of the North of Scotland Newspaper and Printing Company. Like his predecessors, James attended Marischal College, did not graduate, but proceeded to London to be trained in printing. Returning from London he erected a printing works on the Westburn Estate, where some excellent books were printed. He did not enter the Town Council, but served actively on the Association for the Poor, the Savings Bank, the Church Extension Scheme, the Kirk Session of St. Nicholas, and on the School Board from 1879 to 1882. James died on 10th March, 1896, in his 82nd year. In December, 1900, the estate of Westburn was purchased by the Town Council to be a public park. In all David had had seven sons and seven daughters. The second son of David, John Gray Chalmers, likewise entered the business, to work alongside his elder brother

James. John, born 1818, graduated M.A. in Marischal College in 1836 at age 18—Johannes G. Chalmers f. Davidis, typographi Aberdonensis b-s-t-m-A.M. Both brothers were directors and large shareholders in the new company. John married but died without issue on 31st October, 1890. Under his Testament, the sum of £10,000 was given to Aberdeen University to found and endow a chair of English Literature. "I wish it to be regarded as a memorial of the long connection, extending over at least six generations, of the Chalmers family with Aberdeen and its University." By virtue of this magnificent gift and of a further donation of £3000 to erect laboratories, the arms of the Chalmers family appear on the roof of the Mitchell Hall, Marischal College, among those of benefactors of the University. He bequeathed to his trustees £10,000, the revenue of which sum is still used to promote the success of the Aberdeen Journal newspaper as a Conservative Party newspaper, preserving the name Journal in part at least. John's trustees likewise gifted £5000 to the Convalescent Home at Cults, in which the directors of that institution erected a tablet bearing the inscription: "This tablet is placed here in grateful recognition of the gift of £5000 from the Trustees of John Gray Chalmers of Balnacraig, towards the building and endowment of this Hospital. A public-spirited and greatly respected citizen of Aberdeen who left a large amount for charitable and educational purposes finds here a fitting memorial." In 1884 he had gifted to the West Church of St. Nicholas the large stained glass window in the west gable, depicting the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Baptism and the Last Supper. "To the Glory of God and in loving memory of his wife Anna Margaret Smith who died on July 29th 1883, and of his parents David Chalmers, Printer and Publisher in Aberdeen, who died in 1859, and Anne Lamb Campbell who died

in 1870, this Window is dedicated by John Gray Chalmers, whose family have worshipped in the West Church of St. Nicholas for six successive generations—1884." This is an understatement. There are records of the Chalmers family in the Church from 1313.

The last Chalmers to work for the Aberdeen Journal was David Montagu Alexander Chalmers, advocate in Aberdeen, who, with the old firm, served as secretary of the Limited Liability Company till his death on 31st July, 1929. He was the elder son of James Chalmers, and a grandson of David. I can recall his burial in St. Nicholas Churchyard. He was unmarried. His home, Beaconhill, Murtle, was purchased by W. L. Cook, ship-broker, who in turn sold it to Captain John S. Allan, paper manufacturer. The last of the Monkshill, Avochie, and Rothie Brisbane branch was a spinster, Margaret Douglas Chalmers, who died on 4th February, 1927, at her home, Ardbeck, Milltimber, which was purchased by the late Lachlan Mackinnon, advocate, succeeded by his son of the same name, who six years ago exchanged Ardbeck for Fairhill, Milltimber, with Mr. Thomas Walker, trawler owner, who died 31st October, 1953.

One branch of the Chalmers family survives, since 1753, at Aldbar Castle, Brechin. It is descended from Dr. Patrick Chalmers, graduate in medicine, Leyden, Paris, and Padua, 1677, medical practitioner in Aberdeen, proprietor of Hazlehead, who after a lawsuit over the estate of Fedderate was imprisoned for debt in the Tolbooth, Aberdeen, 1719. A surviving account book of fees for treating diseases of well-known North-East lairds makes amusing reading. But his 13th child, William, merchant in Gibraltar, bought back Hazlehead in 1728, was admitted in 1730 an honorary burgess, purchased the lands and barony of Aldbar in the good earth of Angus, in 1753, and sold Hazlehead in 1761 to

George Simpson Couper. A marble tablet in Aberlemno Church records in Latin his death in 1765 aged 65. Henceforward Latin on tombstones begins to be displaced by English.

A word about printing in Aberdeen. In 1621 Bishop Patrick Forbes and Sir Paul Menzies of Kinmundy, Provost of Aberdeen, obtained permission from King James I to set up in Aberdeen its first printing press. So, by invitation, Edward Raban left St. Andrews to settle in Aberdeen as printer to the City and University in a house on the north side of Castle Street (where stands to-day the Clydesdale and North Bank), then recently built by the Town Council as a meal market on the ground floor, a dwelling house for Raban on the first floor, and as a printing shop on the second floor. It was here, up Chalmers' stair, that Bishop Skinner made his way to meet Robert Burns. In 1798 the Journal Office moved to a building in the rear of the Town House; in 1814 to the Adelphi, and thence in 1894 to Broad Street, its present abode, where, in No. 22 in one room, laboured in 1859-1860 my grandfather, a paper-ruler owning one machine of one woman power, driven by my grandmother, and in another room George Robb, printer, with the same woman power, who moved to the Adelphi, and whose son, Mr. Bannerman Robb, solicitor, practised in Portsoy. My grandfather was taken over by Messrs. Alexander Pirie & Sons, Stoneywood, as foreman to a new paper-ruling department. The official town printers were Edward Raban, 1622; James Brown, 1649; John Forbes, 1662; Widow Forbes, 1705; James Nicol, son-in-law of John Forbes, 1710; James Chalmers, 1736.

Our earliest newspapers were simply occasional pamphlets dealing as occasion arose with foreign affairs, *e.g.* News from Spain, 1611; News out of Germany, 1612; out of which emerged Butler's Courant or

Weekly News from Foreign Parts, 1621; and on 7th November, 1665, the London Gazette. The first newspaper written, printed and published in Scotland—on 31st December, 1660—was the Mercurius Caledonius, edited by Thomas Sydserf, son of the Bishop of Orkney; like many of its kind in the early days, it was short lived, expiring on 22nd March, 1661, aged 4½ months. There followed the Edinburgh Evening Courant, 1718; the Caledonian Mercury, 1720, which was incorporated later with the Scotsman; the Glasgow Journal, 1713; and the Aberdeen Journal, 5th January, 1748.

The first number of the Aberdeen Journal consisted of one sheet of hand-made paper, folded once to make four pages, a small folio. The actual paper was not made locally, because our first paper mill—at Culter—was not set up until 1750. Not till 1811 was the first paper-making machine reported in our area—likewise at Culter. Costing twopence sterling including stamp duty, it was delivered over the North-East by post or carrier, each copy often being shared by several families, even by seven families for one forenight each week. The families receiving it towards the end of a week paid a smaller share of the cost. The Newspaper Stamp Act was passed in 1712 to help pay the warfaring of Sir Winston Churchill's ancestor, the Duke of Marlborough; it was finally repealed in 1855 as being restrictive of free speech and education. The Stamp Act of 1712 reduced the sale of the Spectator, London, from 4000 to 1600 copies. The duty on paper was not abolished till 1859, up to which date excise men functioned at each paper mill, as at distilleries. To begin with, its news, mostly foreign, was copied from the south papers. Number one had one advertisement, for lost bank notes.

At the end of one year James Chalmers, editor, printer, publisher, returned thanks in verse to his encouragers:—

My grateful thanks for all your favours past,
Which, pray, continue this year as the last;
From every post impartially, I'll cull
Whatever is not trifling, false or dull
And tho' no more you must expect to hear
Of Cities stormed and Castles blown in air
The fruits of peace, of concord, and of joy
And happier events shall the press employ.

In other words the Jacobite Rebellion was over. In Number 58, in the Poets' Corner—long a regular feature—the following poem appeared, upon the death of the Jacobite, Donald Cameron of Lochiel, an officer in the French Army at Bourges in 1748:—

Compelled by hard necessity to bear
In Gallia's bands a mercenary spear!
Yet Heaven, in pity to his honest heart,
Resolved to snatch him from so poor a part.
To cure at once his spirit and his mind
With exile wretched and with error blind
The mighty mandate unto Death was given
And good Lochiel is now—a Whig in Heaven.

Curiously the first price and the present price (1953) of the Aberdeen Journal were the same—twopence (raised, 1957, to 2½d.). The extremes in price over 210 years have been sevenpence and one halfpenny.

Has the Journal had any rivals? Any number of them. But it has occupied in a large urban area and in a wide rural area a field in which there has not been enough scope for another daily newspaper. The first rival, the Aberdeen Intelligencer, was born in 1752 and was swallowed in 1757 by the Journal. In the decade 1830-1840, a period of religious, political and social ferment, 29 newspapers and magazines appeared—most of them ephemeral, *e.g.* Christian Investigator, Popery Exposer, Protestant Vindicator, Gleaner, Citizen, Pirate, Examiner, Shaver, Intruder, Eccentric, Lounger, Squib, etc. The Aberdeen Herald, a Liberal weekly, at

7d. survived from 1832 to 1876, when it merged with the Weekly Free Press.

The Disruption of the Church of Scotland brought the Banner, the John Knox, and the Chameleon, which may have helped to make every minister in the Church of Scotland in Aberdeen abandon church and manse and join the Free Church movement. In 1853, soon after the Disruption, there was founded the strongest rival to the Journal, namely the Aberdeen Weekly Free Press, which on 4th May, 1872, became a daily, supporting Liberalism and the Free Kirk. The first evening paper to cost one halfpenny and supporting William Gladstone, the Liberal leader, the North Star, appeared in 1870. At this date, till World War I, hours of labour—6 a.m. to 6 p.m.—made an evening paper desirable for the working classes, who were about in 1873 to receive compulsory education, made free in 1889. An enemy compared it to the moon, because it shone with borrowed light, borrowing its news from other papers. Faced with these rivals, the Weekly Journal turned Daily on Friday, 25th August, 1876, with this note from the editor: "Holding fast by the distinct constitutional principles of Church and of State, the conductors of the Journal will advocate whatever reforms may be found expedient in either; and on general questions they will speak out freely and without reserve beyond such as is imposed by a sense of propriety, right feeling and good taste." On 23rd January, 1882, the Free Press launched the Evening Gazette, at one halfpenny, to rival the Journal's Evening Express, launched on Monday, 20th January, 1879. The Bon-Accord made two false starts, as a weekly specialising in satire, music, art, drama, and gossip; its first run in 1880-1881 lasted only 85 weeks; yet this was Aberdeen's first illustrated comic paper. A second attempt in 1886-1887 likewise failed. In one number of this issue an aunt of mine (still alive

in 1953) appeared, tall, slender and good looking, walking along a country road with a boy friend (long dead), short and fat, with the caption, "The long and the short of it." This was not a photograph, of course, but a sketch by the paper's artist. Revived on 3rd April, 1926, the Bon-Accord excels in photographic illustrations and in a selecting of the important local news of the week. Alas! it has lately been swallowed up by the Glasgow Herald along with the whole Munro group of papers.

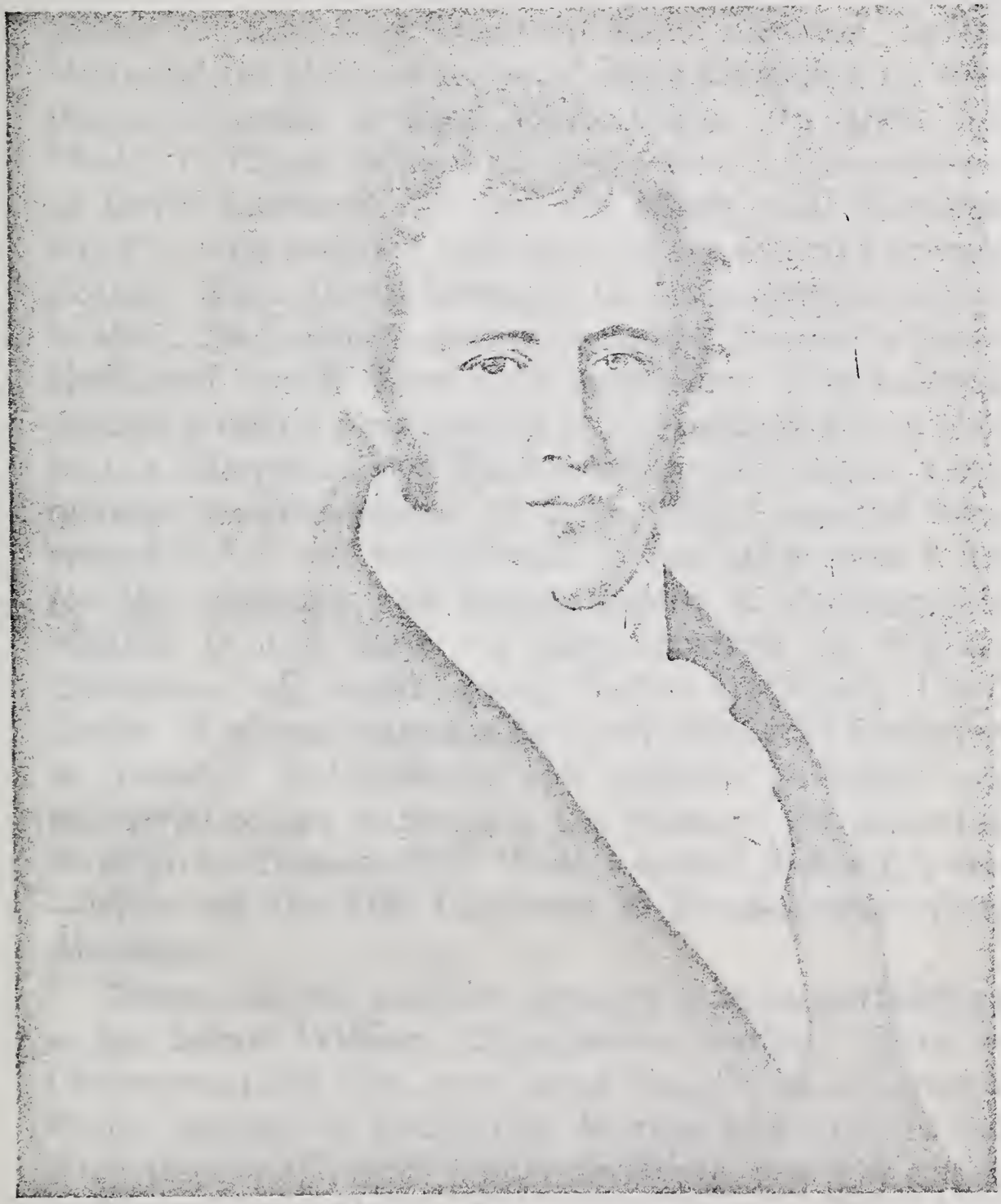
Now we come to World War I and to its effect on paper supply and on newspapers, and on the old political parties, Conservative and Liberal. Alas! after World War I the Liberal Party, once the pride of Britain's Victorian era, was rent asunder by the quarrels of its leaders, Asquith and Lloyd George. At the same time the rapidly growing Labour Party made for a closing of the ranks of Liberals and Conservatives. Thus the political need for two local newspaper offices was lessened. So on 1st December, 1922, the two morning papers, Journal and Free Press, and the two evening papers, Express and Gazette, were amalgamated under the company name of the Aberdeen Newspapers Ltd., whose shares were freely dealt in by the investing public until October, 1928, when the company went into voluntary liquidation and changed its name to Aberdeen Journals Ltd., with debenture stock only on the public market. The final meeting of Aberdeen Newspapers Ltd. was held on 2nd August, 1929. In December, 1936, the control of our Aberdeen Journals passed into the hands of Allied Newspapers (Berry Brothers), now known as the Kemsley Newspapers, a vast organisation of newspapers with a holding capital of about £13 millions. We cannot but regret the loss of independence and the passing south of the control of our local newspapers. The far scattered Kemsley shareholders are not

likely to finance new chairs in Aberdeen University or serve on local government boards as the Chalmerses did.

In 1921 our largest paper mill, of Messrs. A. Pirie and Sons, Stoneywood and Aberdeen, was sold by the Pirie family at 16/8 per £1 share to Messrs. Wiggins, Teape & Co. Ltd., who now own eight paper mills. In 1953 Mugiemoss Paper Mill (C. Davidson & Sons) was absorbed by British Plaster Board, Ltd.

Scottish Agricultural Industries have swallowed up several of our local agricultural companies and have in turn been swallowed by Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd. House of Fraser has swallowed up Messrs. John Falconer & Co., Messrs. Watt & Grant, Messrs. Reid and Pearson, Isaac Benzie, and Watt & Milne. Messrs. A. Hall & Co. and Messrs. Hall, Russell & Co., shipbuilders, are no longer in local hands. Recently a Grimsby fishing company has opened in Aberdeen two retail fish shops, knowing full well that profit is in the distribution of fish and not in the hard labour of catching it. Giant firms from England like Lyons and Unilever supply our ice cream. Union Street and George Street, invaded by multiple firms and London daily newspapers, retain very few of their old local family businesses.

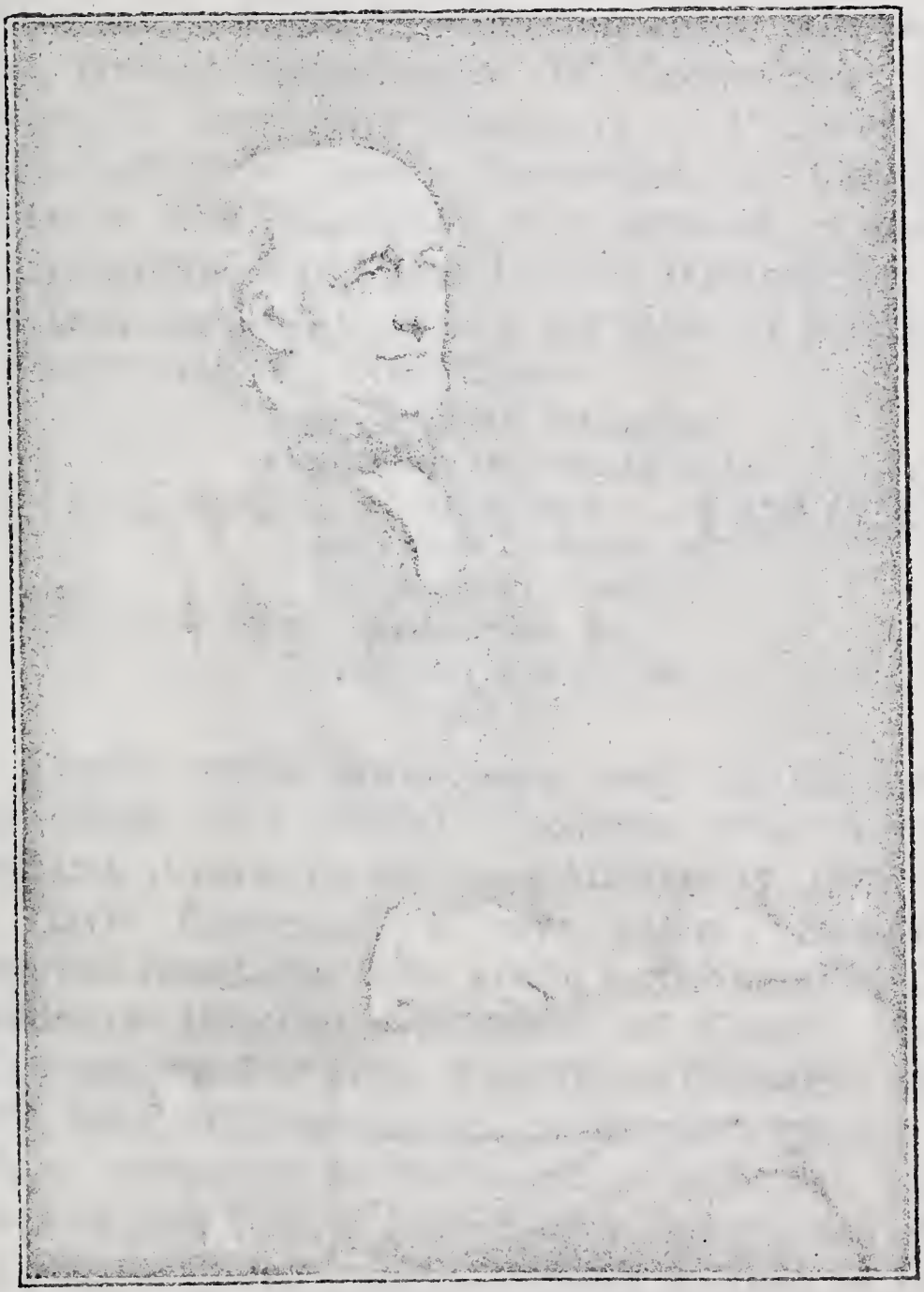
Now what about the Chalmerses in Gothenburg, Sweden? We know that up till the Union of 1707 Scotland traded actively with the Low Countries, with France and with the Baltic countries. After the Union, trade was slowly diverted to England, where the Industrial Revolution began long before it did on the Continent. This Chalmers Industrial School, opened in Gothenburg, 1829, for the training of eye and of dexterity in the hand—a Sloyd School—is to-day the Chalmers University of Technology with Research Institutes in shipbuilding, textile manufacture, nuclear



David Carnegie (1), merchant, founder in 1803 of D. Carnegie & Co., Gothenburg, an import-export business that still flourishes, but without a Carnegie.

physics, and food preserving, granting ordinary and doctorate degrees. The founder built himself a large town house on the canal facing the Museum, with tall pillars of sandstone imported from Scotland, as the stones of the Cathedral and of Haga Church, etc., were imported ready dressed from Leith. In 1839 this Chalmers House became Carnegie House, the residence of David Carnegie (2), and the offices of D. Carnegie and Co., who used the side door for the sale of Carnegie Porter. When David Carnegie (2) returned to Scotland in 1841, the residence was occupied by managers Oscar, Emil, and Gustav Ekman, in succession. This valuable central property was sold by D. Carnegie & Co. in 1952 to the Skandinaviska Banken to be the bank's head-quarters in Gothenburg. In June, 1953, I found it being reconditioned and refurnished in fine style with a flat for the residence and entertainment of distinguished visitors to the bank. A large portrait of William Chalmers, full length, hangs in the University Court Room. Who can estimate the part played by Chalmers in making Gothenburg the largest shipping and industrial centre in Sweden, the home of the renowned Swedish craftsmanship? What I cannot find out is this —when did the first Chalmers in Sweden cross from Aberdeen?

There was yet another mystery man in Gothenburg — by name William Chambers — another form of Chalmers, 1723-1796, who, after being a supercargo in China, settled in London to become architect to our King George III, built Somerset House, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Near Gothenburg on Råda Lake he built himself a manor house in wood, inscribed above the door Anno 1772, in which I found in July, 1953, a portrait of Sara Chambers, the mother of the architect, we suppose. The late Dr. William Kelly, architect, with the help of the late Dr. John Malcolm Bulloch, journalist



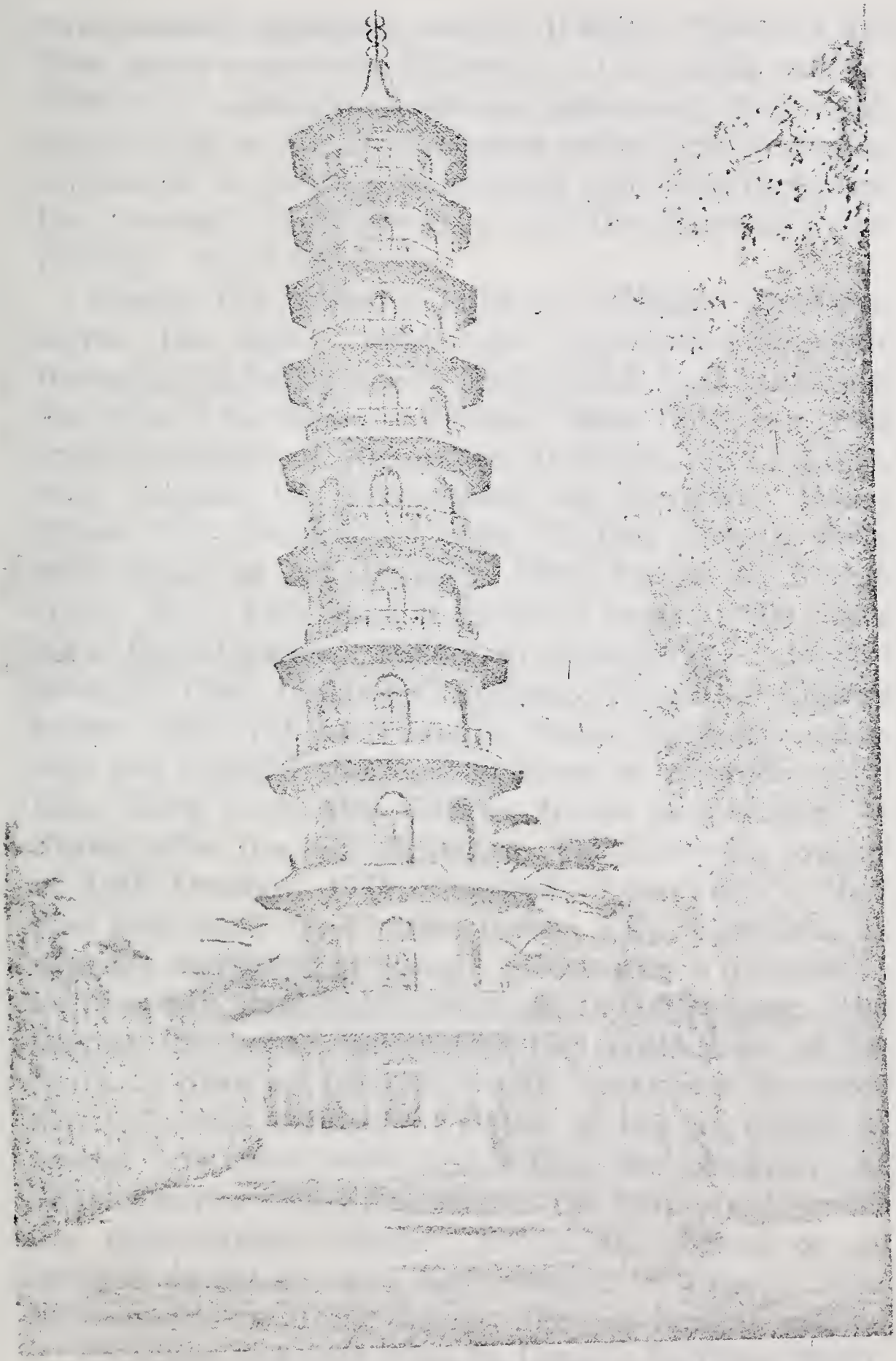
David Carnegie (2) (1813-1890),
merchant, brewer and sugar refiner, Gothenburg.

in London, were almost convinced that this architect of Somerset House belonged to our Aberdeen Chalmers family. I have my doubts, because in the very complete records of the British Factory Poor Box and Church in Gothenburg, the two families seem quite separate. The present burgomaster of Gothenburg, directly descended from Sara Chambers or Chalmers, Gösta Bäärnhielm, is keenly interested in his Scottish ancestry. The inscription, now defaced, on the grave of this architect in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey, has been supplied to me by the Dean of Westminster, a Forfar man, Dr. Alan Don—

SIR WILLIAM CHAMBERS
KNIGHT OF THE POLAR STAR
ARCHITECT
SURVEYOR GENERAL OF
HIS MAJESTY'S WORKS
F.R.S., F.A.S., R.A.,
DIED MARCH 8th 1796
AGED 71.

1616340

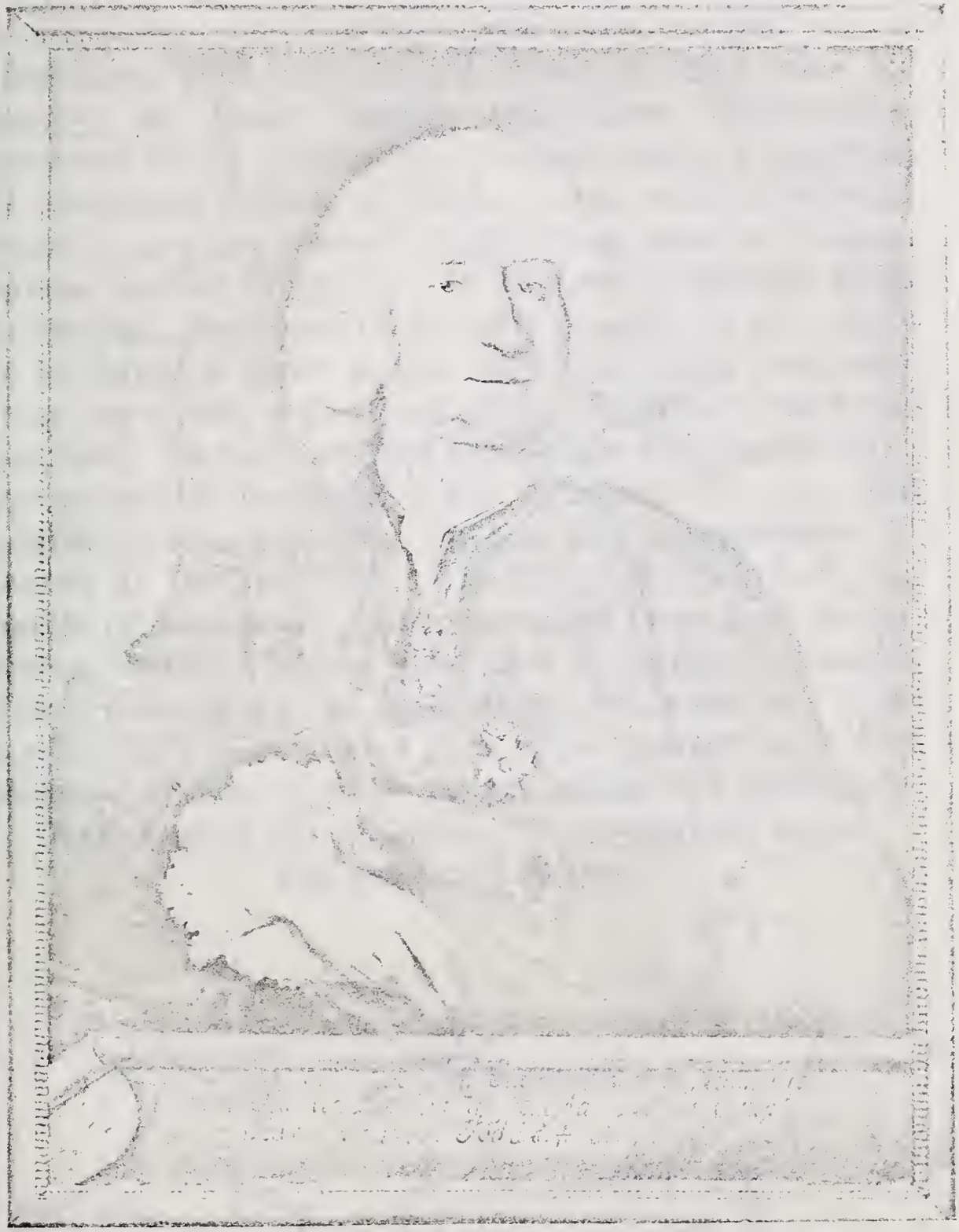
Finally, while Gothenburg owes its University of Technology to a William Chalmers from North-East Scotland, it owes its ordinary University, 1887, largely to David Carnegie — a very active promoter and generous benefactor who gifted to Gothenburg its Sick Children's Hospital — grandson of George Carnegie, Montrose, rebel of 1745. This David Carnegie, who died 1890, laird of Stronvar and Aytounhill, brewer, sugar refiner, merchant in Gothenburg, is buried near the grave of Rob Roy in Balquhidder Churchyard close by the Parish Church which he built in 1850 at his own expense. His son James persuaded Andrew Carnegie, U.S.A., of Skibo Castle, Dornoch, to found at Gothenburg in 1904, with a gift of £10,000, a chair in English Language and Literature. The services of Scotsmen to Sweden are indeed worthy of some written record. Already progress has been made, for several volumes



Pagoda in Kew Gardens built by Sir William Chambers, who was born in Gothenburg, 1723, and who died in London, 1796.

have recently appeared, namely *William Thorburn and Sons, grain merchants, Uddevalla; D. Carnegie and Co., 1803-1953*, a sumptuous volume, generously illustrated; *Gothenburg*, a volume of superb pictures, with copious references to Scottish merchants and manufacturers; the *Carnegie Porter Brewery*, and the *Carnegie Sugar Refinery*, all in Swedish.

Facing the mansion built by William Chalmers, across the canal stands the Gothenburg Museum, formerly the warehouse of the Swedish East India Coy. The wife of the Museum Curator, Mona Roth, is a great grand-daughter of Alexander Anderson, M.A., LL.D., who founded the Gymnasium or Chanonry House School, Old Aberdeen, in 1848. To this museum there was gifted on 1st January, 1953, by H. Q. Forbes Irvine, Esq., 24th laird of Drum, a portrait 200 years old of Colin Campbell, 1686-1757, supercargo of the first Swedish East Indiaman, intimate friend of Charles Irvine, 1693-1771, merchant in Rouen and Gothenburg, who had brought the portrait home to Aberdeen with him. Very likely this Charles Irvine had escaped to France after the 1715 Rebellion. The Aberdeen Journal of 14th October, 1771, reported: "On Tuesday last died here aged 78, Charles Irvine, Esq., sometime an eminent merchant at Rouen, afterwards a member of the Swedish East India Company at Gothenburg. His friends, 'tis hoped, will accept this notification of his death. *Virtus nil indigna laudis; quinetiam lacrymae pondera vocis habent.*" (Virtue is not unworthy of praise; but tears serve better than our praises.) At Rouen Charles Irvine had learned the China trade under the philanthropic Robert Arbuthnot, friend of all refugee Jacobites, who had escaped to France from Killiecrankie in 1689. Robert likewise bought salmon in Aberdeen and sold wine in London to Pope, Swift, Gay, etc., friends of his brother, Dr. John Arbuthnot,



Colin Campbell (1686-1757), first supercargo in 1731 to the Swedish East India Company.

born Elgin
bankrupt in South Sea Bubble 1720-23
joined Scottish Ostend East India Co
Ship it ended 1730, Home to
Gothenburg to head the
Swedish East India Coy.

medical attendant to Queen Anne till her death.

In 1745 the Swedish East Indiaman, Gotheborg, was lost near the mouth of the Gotha river. In 1905 and in 1906 some 4000 unfractured pieces of china were recovered by James Keiller, shipbuilder, Gothenburg, from the wreck. James, now 90 years old, is a grandson of Alexander Keiller, of Dundee stock, who established what is now the largest shipbuilding yard in Sweden. James Keiller, Companion of Honour to the late King of Sweden, presented to my wife on each of two visits to his home a piece of this historical china recovered from the wreck, a bowl and plate, numbered, dated and certified. His father gifted the Keiller Park to the city; James added the massive hill indicator. We saw and admired some cushions worked and autographed in thread by the late King. His wife, Alice Hawks Lyon, has Banffshire blood, being descended from Jean Smith, whose brother George, merchant in Bombay, founded Fordyce Academy. At ages 90 and 89 James and Alice Keiller, still in love with each other, provide a perfect example of how to grow old gracefully and graciously.

How true is the adjective, the *wandering* Scot!

Ubi panis, ibi patria.

1959 Aberdeen Journal
does by Kemsley to
Roy Thomson Canadian
owner & the Scotsman &
To many leaders in Canada
& U.S.A

2960